

at Berwick Pond. *Archana geminipuncta* (Haworth) — common at M.V. and at Berwick Pond. *Archana dissoluta* (Treitschke) — one on 10.vii.1976. *Archana sparganii* (Esper) — common at M.V. and at Berwick Pond. *Rhizedra lutos*a (Hübner) — common late in the year as *sparganii* finishes. *Arenostola phragmitidis* (Hübner) — uncommon: two or three each year at M.V. and at Berwick Pond. *Chilodes maritimus* (Tauscher) — not seen in 1976 but quite common at M.V. at the end of July 1977.

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Reference

Firmin, J. *et alii*, 1975. *A guide to the butterflies and larger moths of Essex*. 152 pp., 4 pls., 1 map. Fingringhoe Wick.

Notes and Observations

THE USE OF THE ROTHAMSTED TRAP. — Having read Mr. Burton's note in the December issue of last year, in which he refers to the use of a Rothamsted type trap, we have been prompted into writing the following upon the use of such traps.

The survey was primarily designed in order to investigate the movements of immigrant moths, and those species of moth which could be damaging to crops. It is also claimed to be of value in conservation, as farmers would be able to be more selective in their spraying if the movements of harmful species were more accurately known. As such we have no quarrel with the survey's objective, although we are a little doubtful about its potential value to conservation. The traps use a 200W. tungsten bulb and all the insects entering are killed, a number of dubious arguments being advanced to justify this, namely (1) That trap operators do not have the time to identify the moths when they are alive, and that because some people cannot identify them at all, it is necessary to send away the catch for identification. (2) That "it has been shown" that it is almost impossible to wipe out any moth population by intensive trapping. (3) That the number killed is only a small proportion of that accounted for by cars. (4) That because a 200W. tungsten bulb is used, only a small sample of the local population is caught. (5) That some moths when released do not survive anyway.

Our contention is that not only is the killing of the whole catch unjustified, but also that it will prove damaging, although being collectors ourselves this is based on conservation, not moral, grounds. Firstly, it seems reasonable to suppose that anyone agreeing to operate one of these traps should have the knowledge, time and interest to count and identify for them-

selves the insects while they are alive. The fact that on a national basis the number killed is only a small proportion of that killed by cars is no justification. On a local level the number killed by a trap will be a much larger proportion but, more importantly, whereas cars kill on a random basis a trap is operated nightly in the same place. Such a trap is bound to exert a damaging effect on the surrounding population, especially if operated in a locality for a species of rare and local distribution. It is also a fallacy to assume that tungsten rather than mercury vapour light is more acceptable. Our own experiences both in the New Forest and here in the garden, have proved that even using a 60W. tungsten bulb very sizeable catches, including rarities, can be obtained. The fact that some moths don't survive when released is no justification for killing the lot!

It is stated that "it has been shown" that it is almost impossible to wipe out any moth population by intensive trapping, and that the catch will consist of species only in relation to their abundance. This is cold comfort when, having run a lamp here¹ for many years, many erstwhile quite common moths are nothing like as plentiful as they used to be. The local insect population is steadily being depleted by factors such as agriculture, reclamation of waste land, tree felling, building and caravan site promotion, and it is difficult to see why the regular killing of all catches throughout the flight period will not simply add to the toll.

In conclusion, it is hoped that this letter will persuade operators of Rothamsted traps that the wholesale killing of the catch is unnecessary and damaging. It is a pity that the Joint Committee for the Conservation of British Insects has shown so little determination in tackling this problem, even though their Code for Insect Collecting is quite specific about excluding the casual killing of catches in moth traps for subsequent examination. — D. C. N. SMITH and Dr. F. H. N. SMITH, "Turnstones", Perrancombe, Perranporth, Cornwall, TR6 0HX.

Thera juniperata L. (LEP.: GEOMETRIDAE) IN THE NORTH. — Further to Mr. C. I. Rutherford's note concerning this species in 1974 (*Ent. Rec.*, **86**: 121), larvae have been found on Juniper purchased at a garden centre near here ("Plantland" on the A64 York Road outside Leeds) and the species is now established in the garden of Mr. A. Kelly of Red Hall, N.E. Leeds. He caught a number in his actinic trap and subsequently found the larvae. The plants involved have been traced back to a nursery at Green Hammerton, near Harrogate. Mr. Rutherford's supposition that the species has been introduced via garden planting would seem entirely correct, but the original source has yet to be established. — Dr. S. L. SUTTON, Southlea, Gateland Lane, Shadwell, Leeds, LS17 8LN.

¹ Always ensuring that only those specimens required are killed, and that the remainder are carefully released out of harm's way.